



UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

United States Patent and Trademark Office

Address: COMMISSIONER FOR PATENTS

P.O. Box 1450

Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450

www.uspto.gov

APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/551,356	08/02/2006	Katsumi Yamaguchi	050635	6417
23850 7590 02/25/2010 KRATZ, QUINTOS & HANSON, LLP 1420 K Street, N.W. Suite 400 WASHINGTON, DC 20005				
EXAMINER				
VAN, QUANG T				
ART UNIT		PAPER NUMBER		
3742				
MAIL DATE		DELIVERY MODE		
02/25/2010		PAPER		

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/551,356

Applicant(s)

YAMAGUCHI ET AL.

Examiner

Quang T. Van

Art Unit

3742

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --
Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 17 December 2009.
2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-8 is/are pending in the application.
4a) Of the above claim(s) 5, 6 and 8 is/are withdrawn from consideration.
5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-4 and 7 is/are rejected.
7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 28 September 2005 is/are: a) ☒ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
a) ☒ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☒ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
2) ☐ Notice of Draftperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
3) ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/06)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date 9/28/05, 9/11/07, 6/3/09 & 10/20/2009
4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____
5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application
6) ☐ Other: _____

Election/Restrictions

1. Applicant's election without traverse of Group I, Species II (Figure 2) and claims 1-4 and 7 are readable on the elected species II in the reply filed on 12/17/2009 is acknowledged. Non-elected claims 5-6 and 8 are withdrawn from consideration.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

2. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

3. Claims 1 and 3 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Miller et al (US 5,289,975) cited by applicants. Miller discloses a method and apparatus for atomizing molten metal comprising a discharge nozzle (10) which melts metal and jets the molten metal (col. 2, lines 55-65), inert gas supply means (28) for supplying inert gas to a peripheral portion of a discharge port (26) of said discharge nozzle (10), and a nozzle cover (17) having a space which is in communication with said discharge port (26) of said discharge nozzle (10) and an outlet of said inert gas supply means (28) and which opens downward, wherein a projection is provided around the opening of said nozzle cover (17).

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

4. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and

the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

5. Claim 2 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Miller et al (US 5,289,975) in view of JP 2001-293551 both cited by applicants. Miller discloses substantially all features of the claimed invention except heating means. JP 2001-293551 discloses, figure 2, heating means (13). It would have been obvious to one ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to utilize in Miller heating means as taught by JP 2001-193551 in order to heat said discharge nozzle and said inert gas supply means.
6. Claims 4 and 7 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Miller et al (US 5,289,975) cited by applicants, in view of Yamada (US 2003/0051851) new cited, and JP 2001-293551 cited by applicants. Miller discloses substantially all features of the claimed invention except a pressing body and said discharge nozzle includes a curved surface shaped inner wall. Yamada discloses, figure 7, a pressing body (20A), and JP 2001-293551 discloses, figure 2, said discharge nozzle (12) includes a curved surface shaped inner wall (Figure 2). It would have been obvious to one ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to utilize in Miller a pressing body as taught by Yamada in order to press said molten metal in said nozzle, and said discharge nozzle includes a curved surface shaped inner wall as taught by JP 2001-293551 in order to form a focal point at said discharge port or in the vicinity of said discharge port.

7. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Quang T. Van whose telephone number is 571-272-4789. The examiner can normally be reached on 8:00Am 5:00Pm M-F.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Tu Hoang can be reached on 571-272-4780. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

/Quang T Van/
Primary Examiner, Art Unit 3742
February 23, 2010

Quang T Van
Primary Examiner
Art Unit 3742